

FITNESS

An Overview of Americans' Overall Physical Activity Levels

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a new report that shows about 1 in 5 American adults engage in a high level of overall physical activity, including both activity at work and during leisure time. At the other end of the spectrum, about 1 in 4 American adults engage in little or no regular physical activity.

Physical activity whether it's walking the dog or simply taking the stairs at work is essential to good health. The report, "Physical Activity Among Adults: United States, 2000," is the first Health and Human Service (HHS) report to focus on the amount of physical activity during a person's usual daily activities, including work, leisure time, or some combination of the two. The data comes from about 32,000 interviews conducted in 2000.

Other recent studies have focused exclusively on leisure time activity, including one last year that showed 7 in 10 Americans were not regularly active during their leisure-time in 1997-98.

The report also documents physical activity among different population groups. About 15 percent of Hispanic adults of all races engage in a high level of physical activity, about the same as black adults (14 percent) and slightly less than white adults (20 percent).

The report also indicates several other factors associated with physical activity:

1. Education. About 1 in 4 adults with an advanced degree engage in a high level of overall physical activity, compared to 1 in 7 of those with less than a high school diploma.
2. Income. Adults with incomes below the poverty level are three times as likely to be physically inactive as adults in the highest income group.
3. Marital Status. Married women are more likely than never married women to engage in a high level of overall physical activity.
4. Geography. Adults in the South are more likely to be physically inactive than adults in any other region.

Visit www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/ad/ad333.pdf to read the complete report Physical Activity Among Adults: United States, 2000.



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